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Rhodesia Situation Pt 14.

T26/80

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10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

14 February, 1980.

**PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. *T 26/80***

Dear Mr. President Banda,

I am taking the opportunity of the arrival of Mr. Peters as British High Commissioner at Lilongwe to write to you personally about Rhodesia.

The Rhodesian election campaign has now entered a difficult final phase. The Governor has had to take firm measures to deal with intimidation and breaches of the ceasefire and we have decided to send a large number of additional personnel to Rhodesia to be present at the polls. There have been faults on all sides. But the activities of the former military wing of Zanu have caused particular concern to the other parties. The latter have had great difficulty so far in campaigning in certain areas dominated by Mr. Mugabe's supporters and by members of his forces who have not yet assembled.

Despite these serious problems we are determined to do all we can to carry the election through to a successful conclusion and to ensure that it is conducted as fairly and freely as possible. In doing so, we are ourselves adhering strictly to the provisions of the Lancaster House agreements and insisting that others do so too. We have never pretended that the Lancaster House agreements

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represented an ideal or perfect solution or that it would be an easy task to implement a negotiated settlement after a long and bitter war. But in our view the agreements represented the most balanced solution which could be obtained and all the parties are committed to them. We cannot accept that they can be unilaterally reinterpreted by the UN or any other body.

I have frankly been disappointed by the lack of support which we have had from other Governments, and especially from members of the Organisation for African Unity, while implementing the Lancaster House agreements. I think you will agree with me that a great deal has been achieved since the agreements were signed on 21 December. Rhodesia is again at peace with her neighbours and her borders have been reopened. The return of refugees is well under way. The great majority of those in Botswana and in Zambia, who wish to go back should be able to do so by the time of the elections. While it is worrying that people continue to be killed in violent incidents inside Rhodesia, the number of casualties has dropped dramatically since the ceasefire day. Joint patrols between elements of the Patriotic Front's forces and the Rhodesian police have begun. Above all, we are well on the way to a Government based on genuine majority rule and on an election involving all the parties.

These achievements have scarcely been recognised in recent meetings of the United Nations Security Council and of the OAU. The one-sided tone of these meetings has made much more difficult the task of implementing the settlement fairly. There are

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undoubtedly those who do not wish to see fair elections and who would prefer a continuation of the war. I do not believe that they have at heart the interests of Rhodesia or of the surrounding countries, which would be badly affected by a collapse of the settlement.

May I urge you very sincerely to use your influence over these next few days and weeks to ensure that those practising intimidation and violence are given no reason to believe that they will receive the support of responsible African Governments. Those who are truly committed to the settlement must speak out openly against abuses which threaten to put at risk everything that has been achieved so far. I hope you will do all you can to avoid any further confrontation at the United Nations. The election cannot be fought in New York or Addis Ababa; it is to be won with votes freely cast at the polling stations in Rhodesia itself.

I hope I can rely on your continued support during these crucial weeks.

With best wishes,

Warm personal regards.

Yours sincerely,

(SGD) MT

His Excellency Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda, G.C.B.,
Life President of the Republic of Malawi.